LABOUR MONTHLY

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STRIKES & VOTES

The Editor

NEW CURRENTS IN EUROPE

Quaestor

GREECE—THE OUTLOOK

Tony Ambatielos

About Christmas – R. Page Arnot
Wages & the Labour Government – Dick Woolf
Anglo-French Weekend – Jack Dunn
Middle East—War or Peace? – Sid Douglas

DECEMBER 1969

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LABOUR MONTHLY

Editor: R. Palme Dutt Associate Editor: R. Page Arnot

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Notes of the Month

STRIKES AND VOTES

> **'Some philanthropists, and even a section of the socialists, think that strikes injure the interests of the "workers themselves". . . I am convinced that successively rising and falling wages, coupled with the resultant eternal conflicts between industrialists and workers, constitute the very means within the contemporary organisation of production that feed the fighting spirit of the workers, fuse them into a united powerful force against the encroachment of the governing class and prevent them from becoming pitiful, more or less well nourished, thoughtless instruments of production. In a social system resting on class antagonisms we have to struggle if we want to combat slavery not only by words, but also by deeds.'**
>
> KARL MARX, London, July 1, 1853, *New York Daily Tribune*, July 14, 1853 (*Collected Works*, Vol. IX, p. 170).

November 18, 1969

The strike movement and revolt of the low paid is today at the centre of the political situation. The Government's 'incomes policy', that obscene mockery to hold down wages alongside skyrocketing profits, is visibly disintegrating. The miners in the van, who for so long had restrained themselves in the interests of a nationalisation which was far from fulfilling their historic aims (Coal Board latest annual return: profits, £28 million; interest payments, £37 million; consequent 'deficit' £9 million), used their strength to win the offer of their full wage demand equivalent to a close on 10 per cent increase, but held out, with half the pits in the country at one point on strike on this issue, for the hours demand of the lowest paid section, the surface workers. The dustmen, amid universal public sympathy for their strike, won an increase equivalent to 16 per cent; and their example gave a stimulus to all the low paid municipal employees. The firemen, with their first official strike call in their record, won the great part of their wage demand, with the £4 10s. increase in London, and £3 10s. in the provinces, equivalent to a 16 per cent increase. Farm workers have extracted from the Wages Board a meagre 8½ per cent increase. The nurses at the bottom of the scale have demonstrated and press their claims. The teachers are in more militant spirit than at any time previously and have tried out various initial forms of action. The millions of working women on unequal pay are showing themselves by no means satisfied to accept the promise of a vague formula spread over five years. The

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'incomes policy' was hypocritically declared at the outset to have the aim to raise the levels of the low paid. Its effect has been the opposite:

> Whatever else may be claimed for the twists and turns of incomes policy over the past three years, it has undoubtedly borne more harshly on the ill-organised and the less well paid (*Financial Times*, November 5).

Now the low paid have begun to enter into action on their own behalf. They have learned the lesson which the same *Financial Times* commentator ruefully noted as the moral of his analysis: '*Militancy pays.*'

Chorus of Denunciation

It might have been thought that this militant spirit and determined advance, and the winning of significant concessions and gains, by some of the low paid and worst off sections, on behalf of whom so many crocodile's tears have been shed by the advocates of the official 'incomes policy', should have brought joy to the hearts of these advocates and of every section of the labour movement. Not a bit of it. A united chorus of denunciation of the strike movement has followed from all high quarters, not only from the megaphone press, big business and the high priests of Toryism, but also from Labour Ministers engaged in putting over the policy of restricting wage increases (while at the same time announcing the release of dividends from limitation) amid the public plaudits of the Governor of the Bank of England. Mr. Heath on behalf of the Tories concentrated his main strategy at the reopening of parliament to denounce the Government for its failure to stop the strikes and wage increases:

> The recent bout of wage increases—10 per cent for the miners, 16 per cent for the London dustmen, 18 per cent for motor workers, at a time when 3½ per cent is supposed to be the norm—show in what contempt Mr. Wilson's Government and its policies are held.

This row of percentage increases may look very fine. But Mr. Heath omitted to mention the biggest percentage increase of all, when *The Sunday Times* immediately after his speech, on November 2, recorded the total of profits during the preceding 52 weeks, amounting to £4,229 million, as representing an increase of 26.3 per cent on the previous year.

Labour Ministers in the Chorus

Did the Labour Ministers reply to Mr. Heath on behalf of the workers? Did they refer to the much higher increase of profits?

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Not at all. They joined in the attack on the strikers and the militant workers. Mr. Callaghan turned his guns against 'aggressive trade unionism'. Mr. Jenkins, in the midst of exulting in the trade surplus achieved by his ruthless squeeze and spreading of unemployment, warned that working-class militancy could endanger the gains won. And the Deputy Leader of the Labour Party, George Brown, denounced the trade unions for 'playing the fool', whereupon he was promptly told off by his own union which he once served, the Transport Workers, and an inquiry instituted concerning his relations with the big monopoly Courtaulds. But the silence of the Tory and Labour Front Benches on the increase of profits exceeding the wage increases won does not mean that the workers are unaware of the facts of life. They have seen by direct experience that in the jungle of capitalism strength is decisive. 'Militancy pays'.

Industrial Ascent—Polls Decline

What has been the effect of this Tory-Labour consensus of denunciation on top against the militant working class below? Its damning effect has been shown in the record of the polls at the five by-elections, universally regarded as a testing of the political climate, on October 30. It is true that Labour held four of the five Labour seats contested. It is true that the 10.4 per cent swing to Toryism represented an advance on the even worse 16 per cent swing averaged in the three by-elections six months previously in March of this year. But a 10.4 swing, even after allowing for the prospective diminution of the figure, in the normal contrast between by-elections and a general election, would still represent a sizeable Tory majority, unless new political forces are brought into play. And the general verdict on the experience of these by-elections has been that the shift has been mainly due, not to indications of any enthusiasm for the Tory programme or Mr. Heath, but to a significant measure of Labour abstentions, and especially the reluctance or withdrawal of a proportion of the normally most active Labour supporters whose role is of such key importance in the practical work of an election. At the same time this negative trend, reflecting disgust with reactionary official policies, has not yet in general, except for a small minority, advanced to the positive step of voting for the alternative candidates available in two of the by-elections, the Communist candidates, voicing the policies actually adopted by the TUC and Labour Party Conference majorities. Thus we have at the moment a dangerously contradictory situation. On the one hand, the working class is in the ascendant, has never been so strong in organised numbers, is

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conducting militant battles and has won successes in the field of industry, in the workshops and the trade unions. The TUC membership has risen to its record height. On the other hand, the political labour movement, with its leadership playing the game of consensus politics with the Tories on the major issues, is in the doldrums. Labour Party membership falls; the polls reveal decline. How to solve this contradiction is now the key problem of today—to combine the advance in the industrial field with a parallel advance in the political field.

Marx on the Strike Movement

When Marx made his observations on the significance of the strike movement in Britain in 1853, quoted at the head of these Notes, and delivered his magisterial rebuke to those 'socialists' who sought to lecture the workers and inform them that the strikes they were indulging in were against their true interest, he based his observations on the most comprehensive survey of every specific strike then in progress, illustrating the care and attention with which he followed every aspect of the working-class struggle. He recorded strikes of blacksmiths and of spinners and weavers in Manchester; carpet workers in Kidderminster; coal miners in the neighbourhood of Bristol; weavers in Blackpool and Darwen; cabinet makers in Boston; bleachers, finishers and dyers in Bolton and neighbourhood; weavers in Barnsley; silk workers in Spitalfields; lace workers in Nottingham; and from a variety of trades in Birmingham. On the basis of this survey he brought out the distinctive feature that 'the essential characteristic of the present strikes is that they began among the lower sections of the unskilled workers' and that 'the factory workers of the big industrial centres of Great Britain were only drawn into the strikes at a later stage.' In his further observations on the significance of the strike movement Marx fought against the two counterposed fallacies and misconceptions. On the one hand, he fought against the doctrines of those 'socialists' who condemned the strikes and failed to understand their essential role in building up the fighting unity and class solidarity of the workers in their indispensable daily struggle against the employers in class society. On the other hand, in his further remarks he fought no less vigorously against the illusion that the ceaseless ups and downs of the wage struggle could bring a solution to the economic problem of the working class, when what was needed was the political battle to win political power for the working class in order to end class society.

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New Conditions of the Working Class

Of course tremendous changes have taken place since Marx made this survey of the strike movement in Britain and its lessons over a century ago. Yet not so tremendous as to make Marx's observations entirely out of date. We still have the upsurge of strikes of the low paid. We still have the problems of the economic and the political battle. For our sins, we still have capitalism. But within this continuing fabric the specific conditions have changed. Even the social composition of the working class has changed profoundly from the days of Marx. Engels classified miners, agricultural workers and factory workers as the proletariat. The census of 1861, used by Marx in *Capital*, showed the most numerous section of the working class to be the agricultural workers (1,098,000), the second largest the factory workers (1,040,000), two thirds of whom were textile workers, and third, the miners (566,000). By the time of the General Strike in 1926, the railwaymen, textile workers and miners constituted 40 per cent of the total membership of the TUC. Today, as the Transport Workers' Secretary, Jack Jones, has recently pointed out, these traditional basic sections of the old TUC now constitute only 9 per cent of its total membership, and are further declining. But the total membership of the TUC has enormously increased, and drawn in vast new sections, including the multiplying numbers of 'white collar' workers, technicians and professional and administrative workers, who play an increasingly indispensable part in the ever more complex productive process, are drawn by the conditions of their employment into closer association with the wage-earning industrial working class, and many of whose organisations are proving themselves in the forefront of progressive battles.

Change and Continuity

In this way the familiar clearly defined analysis in Victorian times of the 'aristocracy of labour' or privileged organised minority with craft skills separated off from the vast unskilled unorganised mass, has undergone profound modifications, with the often strong organisation of the general workers, and changes in technique obliterating many old distinctions or changing the relative position of different sections, so as to make necessary a new analysis, even though the barriers between skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled are still in many cases firmly maintained. On the other hand, the corruption of a considerable proportion of the top leaders of upper sections of the labour movement by richly rewarded positions to draw them away from the class struggle into close and privileged

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association with capitalism, described in such incisive terms by Marx in his day and by Lenin in the early twentieth century as the characteristic technique of the British ruling class, has today grown to astronomical proportions, with the infinite proliferation of state boards and corporations on a scale to constitute a sizeable privileged reformist upper stratum, drawn originally from the working-class movement, but detached in their conditions of life from the working class and associated with upholding the policies of co-operation with capitalism. Thus the basic principles demonstrated by Marx and Lenin with regard to the relations of capitalism and the working class and the class struggle continue to operate and govern also the modern situation, at the same time as the specific forms have changed and continue ceaselessly to change. Marxism is essentially, as its founders used to term it, the critical philosophy, opposed to all dogmatism which treats reality as static, and sees everything which exists as continually changing, at the same time as by its method it elucidates the laws which underlie the process of change and govern each successive economic-social formation.

New Conditions of Capitalism

These changes in the conditions of the working class and the class struggle correspond to the profound changes in technique, the economy and political development. The society of industrial capital analysed by Marx in the mid-nineteenth century, with Britain as the workshop of the world, developed by the beginning of the twentieth century into the monopoly capitalism or imperialism analysed by Lenin, with Britain already losing industrial primacy to the United States and Germany, so that the original pioneer of capitalist progress became the prototype of parasitic decaying capitalism. This in turn developed into the era of the general crisis of capitalism, with two world wars and the advance of the socialist revolution and national liberation, while Britain passed into an era of chronic recurrent depressions and special crises. In these conditions of the general crisis, with the continuing operation of the economic laws of capital accumulation and concentration diminishing the number of monopolies and enlarging their size to gigantic proportions, monopoly capitalism developed, as Lenin was already able to demonstrate in the hothouse conditions of the first world war, into state monopoly capitalism, with the state acting as the executive organ of the handful of giant monopolies. Thus when Labour in Britain came to office, and eventually to a parliamentary majority, as a result of the conditions of capitalist decay and the

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advance of socialism in the world, the reformist leadership did not enter on an era of the continuation of placid liberal social reforms, as they had anticipated, but found themselves becoming the administrators of state monopoly capitalism, alternately exulting in the vastness of their new administrative responsibilities and bewildered by the incomprehensible successive crises dogging their efforts.*

From Utopian Socialism to the 'Mixed Economy'

The euphemism for state monopoly capitalism is the 'mixed economy'. Among the founders of the Labour Party the socialists hoped to see it become the organ for the achievement of socialism, most of them seeing this process through the Fabian gradualist programme of extending nationalisation and taxation, while the non-socialists saw it as an organ for achieving legislative measures in the interest of the working class, especially the protection of trade union rights. The outcome has so far frustrated both expectations, as successive Labour Governments have become the administrators and organisers of state monopoly capitalism, and in this capacity, as the representative of capitalism in crisis, have had to deliver heavy offensives against the working class and against trade union rights. In this modern situation the more logical West German Social Democrats formally expunged the aim of socialism from their programme at their Bad Godesberg Congress in 1958. The doctrinaire Gaitskell tried to do the same for the Labour Party by his campaign to remove Clause 4, enshrining the aim of 'common ownership of the means of production', from the Constitution. But the more empirical British movement has so far preferred to maintain the sacred formula in the holy place, while adapting the practice to the requirements of modern capitalism. The resultant system of state monopoly capitalism, with its minority 'public sector' and majority 'private sector' both heavily exploiting the workers and yielding rich returns to the capitalist investors, is described as the 'mixed economy', which is regarded as the real

* The extent to which the Wilson Labour Government has functioned as the organ of state monopoly capitalism has been illustrated by the remarkable number of ever changing new Ministries and Departments spawned by them. Here are a few established since 1964: Department of Economic Affairs (begun with a trumpet blast and now slaughtered); Department of Employment and Productivity; Ministry of Technology; Prices and Incomes Board; Commission on Industrial Relations; Industrial Reorganisation Corporation; National Freight Corporation; Shipbuilding Industry Board; Overseas Marketing Corporation—not to mention a host of Regional Planning Councils and Regional Economic Boards. Taken over from the Tory Government and strengthened have been the Monopolies Commission, the National Economic Development Council and a swarm of Little Neddies.

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pattern for progress, while the formula of 'socialism' is reserved for the occasional platform peroration, adornment in the corner of a document or for the description of any measure of liberal social reform.

A Choice of Slogans

Care is needed in this occasional surviving reference to the formula of 'socialism' by the advocates of the 'mixed economy' or state monopoly capitalism to avoid any economic definition of socialism and keep it strictly as a spiritual conception. Thus Barbara Castle:

> I've always seen Socialism as a spirit, an atmosphere for the conduct of relationships, a state of mind in which the rescue operations can be carried out and which will reorganise and re-shape institutions so that the spirit can be released in society (Barbara Castle, interview to Kenneth Harris, *Observer*, October 5).

In the same interview she proclaimed her view that 'Bevanism was this country's best defence against Communism.' It is remarkably difficult to present the 'mixed economy' as a slogan to arouse the enthusiasm of the masses of the people. Hence slogans have to be found by all the representatives of state monopoly capitalism, whether Tory or Labour, Republican or Democrat, which shall avoid any economic content and present a purely spiritual message. Time was when Tories could proclaim such vulgar concrete slogans as 'Three Acres and a Cow', or Liberals promise 'A Free Breakfast Table' (i.e. removal of food taxes). But in the days of state monopoly capitalism this is no longer appropriate. So Mr. Heath aroused his Tory Conference to delirious enthusiasm with a peroration which offered Britain 'the glory and the gleam'. In the following week at Brighton Mr. Wilson offered on behalf of Labour 'the faith and the vision', while the Labour publicity campaign has chosen the slogan 'life and soul'. In the United States President Nixon swept the polls with his promise to fulfil 'the American dream'.

New Problems of the Economic Struggle

These new conditions of the economic and political development of modern capitalism and the working-class movement have brought new problems for the economic struggle of the working class. The accelerating pace of technological change wipes out old demarcations, so that the inherited trade union structure from a previous era is sorely taxed, and new forms and methods have to be developed, especially on the basis of the place of work or the enterprise or giant monopoly concerned, to make possible effective combined

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action. Similarly the merciless axe of technological change strikes down old established industries from their former primacy, with consequent human tragedies as with the closed pits and desolation of former closely knit mining village communities. The headlong rush of giant mergers, not only arising from technical requirements of concentration of large-scale production, but often reflecting mainly financial manipulations remote from the point of production, or the operations of international companies with no special obligation to a subsidiary in Britain if a subsidiary in another country is proving more profitable, can bring on an area a blight of redundancy dismissals, for which the governmental provisions to ensure redundancy payments and stimulate alternative industries in the blighted areas are all too inadequate in the anarchic conditions of capitalism. In this connection a useful survey could be made of the care and attention which is now being paid in the Soviet Union to meet all the problems, and in the forefront the human and family problems, arising from technological change and consequent redundancies in a socialist society where there is a shortage of labour instead of unemployment, and where the interests of the working people come first.*

Strikes Then and Now

In these conditions of state monopoly capitalism and revolutionising technological change every economic struggle takes on a political character far more openly and directly than in preceding periods. From the imprecations of the Tory leadership and the kept press it might be thought that Britain is swept with strikes which are ruining the economy. This is a myth to conceal the real political purpose of the offensive on trade union rights and working-class standards. It is only necessary to compare the scale of the present strike movement with the scale of the strike movements on the eve of the first world war or in the early twenties before the general strike. In 1967 the number of working days recorded as lost through strikes was 2 million. In 1968 it was 4.7 million (the increase being mainly due to the engineers' 24 hour token stoppage). And now contrast these figures with those of the earlier years of militancy:

* Reference may be made to the article by Konstantin Novikov, Chairman of the State Committee on Employment of Labour Resources of the Russian Federation, on 'Labour Shortages and Redundancy, and How to Deal with Them', in the *Kommunist* No. 13 of 1969, translated in *Soviet News* of October 21, 1969.

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Working Days Lost Through Industrial Disputes

1913	9,800,000	**1922**	10,850,000
1919	34,900,000	**1923**	10,670,000
1920	26,570,000	**1924**	8,420,000
1921	85,870,000	**1925**	7,950,000
		1926	162,230,000

These were the years during which, as the Cabinet records have now abundantly revealed, the real, not pretended fear of revolution in Britain pervaded Cabinet thinking. After the threat of the Triple Alliance and the confrontation of Red Friday the strategy of the ruling class was deliberately directed to provoke the general strike, in order, with the assistance and connivance of the reformist leadership sabotaging the fighting readiness of the workers, to break the challenge of the trade unions and bring them to heel. There followed the strategy of Mondism and its various forms of sequel to draw the top trade union leadership into co-operations as 'equal partners' in the machinery of state monopoly capitalism.

Battle Over the Shop Stewards

Today the ground of battle has moved. The ruling class thought they had nobbled the trade unions by the methods of drawing the top leadership into a triple partnership with the employers and the state machine. It has only more recently dawned on them that they have not nobbled the working class at the point of production, and that this is the real foundation and energising force of trade unionism. When during the first world war the Treasury Agreement already tied up the top trade union leadership for the duration, the development of the joint shop stewards' committees in the key centres of industry became the forefront of the working-class fight; and this was carried further forward during the second world war and in the modern period. This development of the fight from below, at the point of production, has in turn influenced the slower moving trade union machine, so that progressive majorities have begun to replace the former right-wing domination in the annual sessions of the TUC (not yet in the General Council as at present constituted, but this is due for reform), and progressive leaders have come to the forefront in some of the most powerful unions which were previously regarded as citadels of reaction. The ruling class have accordingly turned to concentrate their strategy on the new ground; hence all the noise about 'wildcat strikes', 'irresponsible shop stewards' and the necessity of new legislation on industrial relations. The Donovan Report set out the strategic line to recognise

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the key role of the shop stewards, and to adopt the aim to 'constitutionalise' them, as it were, by incorporating them in the formal machinery of joint conciliation, with even the possibility of replacing national wage agreements by shop agreements as the form for collective wage settlements. The dangers involved in this line of approach are evident: to undermine the indispensable national trade union role by a type of company agreements, and to open the way to seek to establish legal control of the functions of shop stewards, with no doubt eventual elimination of 'troublemakers' and future legislation to make such collective agreements legally enforceable. When Barbara Castle proclaimed to her audience of 5,000 directors at the gathering of the Institute of Directors at the Albert Hall on November 6 that 'we have got to recognise, whether we like it or not, that real power resides in the workshop,' she was of course expressing, not a militant sentiment (real power still rests with capitalism, not yet with the working class), but the current strategy of the capitalist class to seek to tame the shop stewards. This is the battle that now develops on the economic and also on the political field.

Industrial and Political Action

Throughout the historical record the British labour movement has tended to alternate between concentration on the industrial and on the political field. The collapse of the Grand National Consolidated Trades Union was followed by the upsurge of Chartism. The collapse of Chartism was followed by concentration on craft unionism with the most limited Lib-Lab politics. Disillusionment with these limitations was followed by the socialist revival and upsurge of the New Unionism, which prepared the way for the formation of the Labour Party. The record defeat of Toryism at the 1906 election and return of the Labour Party to parliament was followed by disillusionment with the Liberal Government of 1905-10, supported by the Labour Party, and the militant industrial upsurge of 1911-14. Disillusionment with the MacDonald Labour Government of 1924 was followed by Red Friday and the General Strike. So today the record advance of trade unionism and the extension of the strike movement accompanies the disillusionment with the Wilson-Jenkins Labour Government's policies of the squeeze and unemployment and anti-union legislation, which has found reflection in the Labour slump so far in the polls. But it is necessary to find the way to combine the industrial and the political fight. Lenin wrote long ago:

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> For the socialist the economic struggle serves as a basis for the organisation of the workers into a revolutionary party, for the strengthening and development of their class struggle against the whole capitalist system (Lenin, *Apropos of the 'Profession de Foi'*, 1899, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 293).

The participation of the trade unions as mass organisations of the working class in the political field is a historic gain not to be surrendered, whatever the present limitations of leadership and policies. But this cannot be a substitute for the parallel indispensable necessity of a political class party of the working class, uniting the vanguard of militant class-conscious workers and socialists, for the aims of working-class power and socialism, and for the immediate aims of the struggle against monopoly capitalism. Without this the mass unity in the political field becomes at the mercy of capitalist politics. That is why the Communist Party Congress has been of vital importance. In the present electoral conditions the path of this aim is still difficult. But the parallel fight of the Communist candidates, the maximum fight of all the left representatives in the Labour Party in the selection of candidates, the adoption of policies and the character of the campaign, and the full exertion of the influence of militant trade unionism, is preparing the way for the advance to this objective, which is expressed at present in the conception of left unity, and which is the key to the next stage of political advance in Britain.

R.P.D.

LABOUR MONTHLY FORTY YEARS AGO

We have now entered the ninth winter of continuous unemployment and the problem again occupies the centre of the political stage. To allay the increased restlessness and agitation of the unemployed which usually marks the approach of winter, extensive publicity is again being given to national and local 'schemes for providing employment'. During the period of the Baldwin Government, the National Labour Party and the TUC General Council set themselves out to create the impression that the only hope for the unemployed lay in the return of a Labour Government. They tried to smash every militant move of the unemployed on the plea that such struggles and agitations would be in vain; that in the ballot box alone lay the means of salvation!

Masses of the unemployed took no heed of such cowardly and treacherous pleadings, as was proved repeatedly by the agitations of the National Unemployed Workers' Movement and particularly the great hunger marches . . .

(From 'Unemployment and the Labour Government', by Wal Hannington, *Labour Monthly*, December 1929.)

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NEW CURRENTS IN EUROPE

Quaestor

GIANT strikes, unofficial stoppages, demonstrations of young people against all kinds of hardships, clashes with the police—and, to this accompaniment, instability of governments, party splits, ebbing away of voters' support, sinister hints of plotted military coups (already exposed in Italy and West Germany, not far beneath the surface in France). This is the picture in many capitalist countries. Behind it rises a groundswell of feeling among the peoples that they cannot go on living as they have done in recent years—and it encounters a stubborn reluctance of the ruling classes to give way.

One of the main causes of this international unrest and internal conflict is the ever growing burden of armaments: a burden both material (the difficulty of making both ends meet) and moral (the fear that the 'little wars' already raging in Asia and Africa may grow into a third and nuclear world war, as happened last time). Newspapers, TV, radio, politicians' speeches bear witness to it almost daily. And it is why the western capitalist governments in 1969 have responded to some extent to the Warsaw Pact countries' proposal, last March at Budapest and again at the end of October in Prague, that an all-European Conference of Governments be called, to plan the conclusion of a European Security Treaty which would replace the two military blocs at present existing—the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and the Warsaw Treaty alliance. The response is all the more significant when contrasted with the uniformly hostile reception of the same proposals when they were made by the USSR in July, 1955, at the Geneva 'Summit' Conference, and by the same Warsaw Treaty powers in July 1966, at Bucharest.

The Scandinavian states declared their support at the beginning of September: three of them are members of Nato (Denmark, Iceland and Norway). Finland has offered to act as host to the Conference, and has had so far 23 acceptances: no rejections except by Albania. A leading Nato power, Italy, and a leading neutral, Yugoslavia, have said they are interested in it. The North Atlantic governments discussed the scheme at their two meetings in Brussels (October 18-21 and November 5-6), and at least promised to study it—though with many sour comments.

What have the Warsaw Powers proposed for immediate consideration? Briefly, it is that the Conference should be prepared by preliminary discussions among all the states concerned. In their com-

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muniqué of March 17, they had suggested a preliminary 'meeting at the earliest possible date of representatives of all interested European States, to establish by mutual agreement the procedure for calling the Conference, and also to determine the items on the agenda'. Now, having seen the obvious desire of some governments to 'act dumb' and to raise all kinds of queries before committing themselves even to a preliminary meeting, the communiqué of October 31 offered talks first 'in bilateral *or* multilateral consultations'. While themselves suggesting two items for the agenda of the Conference—'ensuring of European security and renunciation of use or threats of force in relations among European states'; and 'extension of trade, economic, scientific and technological relations'—they said in so many words that they were 'ready to discuss any other proposals' intended to promote the all-European Conference. Incidentally, no British capitalist newspaper printed the text of either the March 17 or the October 31 communiqué.

Informally, the Foreign Office has let it be widely known that the British Government is 'less than enthusiastic' about the proposal and, being 'more wary than most', has 'applied the brake within Nato' (*Guardian* diplomatic correspondent, October 17 and 29). How artificial the wariness is can be seen by the kind of argument for delay put up by its spokesmen at the Nato meetings, as attested by reports in papers like the *Times* and *Telegraph*. 'The agenda must be carefully prepared'—which is just what the Warsaw powers proposed, *but each time suggesting a practical procedure, ignored by Nato*. 'Canada and the USA haven't been invited'—when the USSR in 1955 and the Warsaw powers in 1969 both left no doubt that such invitations would be no obstacle. 'The new proposals aren't definite enough'—but when they were defined in much more detail, in 1966 and last March, they were ignored or ridiculed. Even the promise to 'study' the proposals carefully is made without the slightest hint of a commitment.

The present danger, in fact, is the one envisaged by the unusually frank British correspondent who had reported on the October meeting at Prague—'the temptation must be to shoot the Conference politely down by means of gracious prevarication' (*Guardian*, November 3). And who can doubt that our 'far from enthusiastic' Foreign Office is skilled at that? But if working-class organisations and Labour MPs are as energetic on this truly vital question for world peace as they have been on, say, the Queen's Civil List, they can remove any such temptation from the minds of Mr. Wilson, Mr. Stewart and their Foreign Office underlings.

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WAGES AND THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT

Dick Woolf

Divisional Organiser,
Draughtsmen's and Allied Technicians' Association

IT has been commented upon elsewhere that the Queen's speech at the opening of parliament made only a passing reference to the Government's intention to seek again to take legislative powers against the trade unions. The Prime Minister did make a further comment indicating that it is the Government's intention to reactivate Part 2 of the 1966 Prices and Incomes Act as a bridging measure until a new bill amalgamating the Monopolies Commission and the Prices and Incomes Board (PIB) could be passed through parliament.

It is obvious that despite the massive campaign mounted by the trade unions and other sections of the working class, against Barbara Castle's previous attempt to shackle the unions, the limited victory achieved by the workers did not succeed in changing the policy of the Government. In fact, it is possible that the Government feels more secure in progressing their moves against trade unions, having succeeded in their confidence trick of getting the TUC to do their work for them. The continuing tragedy of the Government's self-hypnosis, that leads them to believe that they are putting the country to rights by reducing the workers' standards, ignores all the relevant arguments of why people voted to put the Labour Party into political power.

Supporters of the Government's point of view still continue to talk of looking after the lower-paid section of the community, and the need to have more efficient industry, regardless of the fact that the employers' idea of efficiency is greater exploitation of workers, which already shows in the growing unemployment figures. So the real facts are that the low-paid sections have not advanced their standards and if the growing number of unemployed, who are on really low 'pay'. are taken into account, then this point is further underlined. But a more significant exposure of losses sustained by the workers is given in Norman Atkinson's pamphlet, *Whatever Happened to Our Wages?** This excellent pamphlet gives a wealth of

**Whatever Happened to Our Wages?*, Norman Atkinson, MP, Tribune Publications, 24½pp., 1s.

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facts exploding the myth that all the economic ills that beset this country are due to the 'greedy trade unionists'.

Acknowledgement is given to some betterment in living standards but this has been due, to a large extent, to improvement in total family income and not in individual wage packets, which, in reality, means that the average wage earner with a small family to keep solely on his own wage is very near the 'bread-line'. The role of trade unions is acknowledged, as without their organisation and negotiations the disparity between wage earners and the more privileged sections of our society would have been far greater. Whilst this point of view is self evident, it has to be stated that it has become more and more necessary for workers to use their industrial strength to obtain wage increases.

The policies of the Government have given sustenance to employers encouraging them to resist workers' claims although, contrary to some beliefs, they have never been noted for their generosity or willingness to concede to any claim. Workers continually see the results of the Government's policies as giving to the employers and financiers a growing amount of wealth and power by way of their booming profits. It is not surprising, therefore, to see a wave of industrial unrest moving through all sections of industry, either by official or unofficial action.

The activity of the dustmen throughout the country was a great demonstration of workers showing publicly that they were not tolerating any longer their low pay and consequent low standard of living. This point of view is also shared by other workers and, during the past months, industrial activity has been taking place in a wide range of industry. Journalists in Glasgow struck in support of a pay demand; hospital electricians struck work for an increase in their hourly rate; women lavatory cleaners walked out of the Lucas (Birmingham) factory on an issue of equal pay with men doing the same work. In Aberdeen, trawlermen struck work in support of 1,200 trawlermen on strike for two months for a wage increase. Blast-furnacemen in Port Talbot were out for six weeks in support of 140 low-paid men who were seeking full payment of a nationally agreed increase.

At BEA and BOAC, engineering workers operated an overtime ban and a work-to-rule in support of a wage claim. Workers at the Admiralty dockyards struck for a day in protest at a delay in pay negotiations. In the motor industry there has been massive activity to advance the wages of all sections of workers. The strike at Leyland Motors ultimately led to a settlement for skilled workers and

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women workers, with a guaranteed fall-back rate for jobs in dispute. Sections of the press and other industrial reporters have singled out car workers for being excessive in their wage demands, but any real appraisal of this highly profitable industry would show that the workers are still very modest in their claims.

Miners, who are praised when by some tragic accident their dangerous occupation hits the headlines, are often maligned when they seek to gain some reasonable conditions in their work, and the recent strike by the miners, for a 40-hour week including meal breaks, again underlines the need to fight for better conditions.

It must be said that, in the main, the workers' fights are industrial in character, but the Labour Government's policies now bring most of them into the political field. Mr. Wilson and Mrs. Castle not only give the employers the green light to resist the workers' just claims, but the Tory Party now climbs on the band wagon to tell all and sundry what legislation they will introduce to 'clobber' the workers. It is becoming evident to the workers that, on basic economic issues, little difference exists between the Government and the Tory Party and little doubt is left when one reads the comments made by Mr. G. Brown, the deputy leader of the Labour Party, when, according to reports, he stated recently at a meeting of the Greater London Council Labour Women's Advisory Committee that 'trade unions were playing the fool . . . especially those [husbands] who refuse to empty dustbins and those who refused to work on Guy Fawkes night. They will destroy us and all we stand for.' Workers will, by their actions, show such persons that the role of the trade unions is to protect and to advance the conditions of their members.

At the time of writing this brief article, it is reported that the Government intends to end the dividend restraint on December 31, 1969. This move has been welcomed by the City and industry, and the Confederation of British Industry have been reported as 'naturally relieved'. Many trade unionists have doubted the relevance of the formal dividend restraint, bearing in mind that the unpaid dividends are only deferred payments and cannot be equated to lost wage increases that are lost forever if foregone by the Government's freeze and PIB decisions.

The Government's intention of pursuing anti-trade union legislation must be resisted by all workers and this can be done, as witness the mobilisation of workers on all fronts in combating the previous attempts by Mrs. Castle. With the TUC now taking the power to interfere with wage claims some confusion could develop on the

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way forward, but the industrial activity that has developed clearly indicates that workers do know what it is all about and the lesson has been learnt that, whilst the previous movement did involve all organisations, the most powerful pressure was exerted when workers demonstrated that they were prepared to defend their rights not only by getting their trade unions into action and pressurising parliament by way of their MPs, but also by the direct action of withdrawing their labour from the workshops and offices.

ABOUT CHRISTMAS

R. Page Arnot

AT the risk, nay the certainty, of being called pedantic I utter my protest against the acceptance by Ivor Montagu in his otherwise splendid article *On Celebrating a Revolution* (*LM*, November 1969) of the claim to set Christmas at 'near 2,000 years ago'. Undoubtedly, the dating of these biblical matters presents difficulties. The date of crucifixion had a frame of reference in the Passover as had the festival which Germans call Pfingst. Similarly, the Epiphany of January 6 dated the adult baptism, the water-into-wine wedding in Cana of Galilee and the celebration of the Three Kings (the Magi). But it was not until later that a series of dates for the Nativity (such as January 6, May 21, March 25) were all abandoned in favour of December 25, and the Feast of Stephen had then to be moved on to December 26 under the title of Boxing Day. Not until 534 in the reign of the Emperor Justinian did Christmas become legally a *dies non* or, as we term it since Sir John Lubbock, a Bank Holiday.

In Scotland I was brought up in an earlier tradition of Yuletide which was centred on New Year's Day with 'the daft days' following. Christmas, to which little attention was paid amongst us Picts and Scots, was utterly condemned in an Act of the Scots Parliament of 1647 as a 'superstitious day'. This Act unless expressly repealed is still valid. In any case the Venerable Bede, whose best MSS is now kept in the Hermitage in Leningrad, before he died in 735 recorded that on December 25 the heathen Saxons (then our southern neighbours) had a festival called Modranicht—details of which his prudery forbade him to disclose. To those ineluctable practices, nevertheless, the church in England succumbed early—but centuries before Queen Victoria's Prince Albert brought into Britain the candle-fruited fir tree.

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ANGLO-FRENCH WEEKEND

Jack Dunn

Secretary,
National Union of Mineworkers (Kent Area)

ON the weekend of October 25/26, the NUM Kent Area and the Kent Council for Peace in Vietnam together with French miners and the French peace movement co-operated in organising a Vietnam weekend of activities. In September 1968 a one-day event had taken place in Boulogne supported by much the same organisations and joined by Fenner Brockway, Anne and Russell Kerr, MPs, Clive Jenkins and others from British trade unions. At the 1969 Annual Conference of the KCPV the Kent miners successfully proposed that an Anglo-French weekend should be organised in the Kent coalfield. The date fixed, we quickly reached agreement with our French comrades on the basic details of the programme of events which included a demonstration, meetings, a blood donor session and cultural events including an Anglo-French folk concert and a representative Kent miners v. French miners soccer match. The French contingent was limited to 300 (they indicated they would like to bring 3,000) because we decided to provide accommodation overnight. However, our Miners' Union in Kent was more concerned to get something done—some action that would publicise our concern, that would generate public concern about the criminal, aggressive American war in Vietnam. We were concerned that although millions of British people, members of trade unions, the Labour Party, Co-operative movement, peace movement, churches, had expressed total opposition to the American war in Vietnam and had called upon the British Government to dissociate from American Vietnam policy, there had not been any Government response to the call. We therefore decided that someone should initiate a public campaign to involve British trade unions and trade unionists in demanding that the British Government should honour and implement the policy of the Trades Union Congress and Labour Party. After all, this is what broadly happened in the battle against the White Paper, *In Place of Strife*. There is little doubt in my mind that, if we in Britain can rouse our movement and get united action, we can force the Government to dissociate from American policy in Vietnam; there is little doubt too that without British support the Americans would have to withdraw from Vietnam and peace would

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prevail 'in place of strife' in that war-ravaged land of the heroic Vietnamese people. That was and remains the aim of the Kent miners.

We invited Vietnamese comrades from both the Democratic Republic and the Provisional Revolutionary Government, and, although we had some difficulty on the way—we eventually did succeed in welcoming and greeting Nguyen Minh Vy (DRV) and Nguyen Van Tien (PRG). We were very proud that we were the first organisation that had succeeded in getting a political representative from North Vietnam into Britain, following the success of our Scottish mining comrades who had been hosts to the first trade union representative from North Vietnam.

After a tremendous amount of preparatory work and much assistance from our movement including the British peace movement the weekend arrived. Unfortunately, Saturday, October 25, was the first day of rain for months, and this deterred some families from joining the demonstration. Our French comrades were late arriving due to tedious customs formalities at Dover. But, bands playing and posters and banners flying, our demonstration started promptly on its one-and-a-half mile march through the town of Deal into the Betteshanger mining community. During the march we were joined by our French comrades including Leon Delfosse and Marcel Barrois, President and General Secretary of the French mineworkers, and Professor M. Astre of the French peace movement and many other leading trade union officials, majors, councillors and others. Looking back, the demonstration stretched some hundreds of yards and at the subsequent meeting our total accommodation of some 1,500 persons in the Miners' Club and marquee was overflowing. The local police who co-operated splendidly in all the arrangements estimated that 2,000 demonstrators attended.

Our meeting was a tremendous success. The speakers were Fenner Brockway, Stan Orme MP, Lawrence Daly (General Secretary NUM), Leon Delfosse, Professor Astre and our two Vietnamese guests—English and French speeches had been translated and duplicated thus avoiding the necessity of interpretation and an otherwise very long meeting. Bob Morrison, Chairman of Betteshanger Miners' Branch, took the collection and a little under £500 was realised including £110 and £150 from Kent and French miners. The weekend was tremendously successful and it was after all a springboard for a campaign that will and must result in our British trade union and Labour movement using its strength in the battle to end the war in Vietnam and get the Americans back to America.

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MIDDLE EAST—WAR OR PEACE?

Sid Douglas

IN January 1967, an article appeared in this journal entitled *Israeli Aggression in the Middle East*, which drew attention to the imminent danger of war in that region. That war occurred six months later—the so-called 'Six Days War'. Once again there are signs indicative of attempts to mount a new major military escalation by the Zionist Israeli Government with the connivance of US imperialism.

The attack on the Arab resistance fighters by the Lebanese army on the orders of the Lebanese President, without the knowledge of his own Prime Minister, who as a consequence resigned, is one such indication. Previous interventions in the Lebanon by the US make the action of the Lebanese President highly suspect.

The further arming of Israel by the US with Phantom planes, and the pressure in Britain to supply Israel with Chieftain tanks (*Evening Standard* editorial, October 30) are still further indications, and Washington's decision to permit American citizens to join Israel's armed forces and still retain their US citizenship is highly ominous. Moreover, the political escalation of the Israeli Government to the right, with Dayan blackmailing the Mapai (Labour Party) leadership into an annexationist policy adds greatly to the danger of a new major military adventure and a third world war.

However, 1969 is not 1967 and opposition to the Zionists' plans and aspirations now exist where none existed in 1967. This is true even amongst many of the erstwhile supporters of Zionism, who reject tears without end and a future without perspective.

Lavon, the former Israeli Security Minister, a previous Mapai leader, as well as a former General Secretary of the Histadrut (Trade Union), on December 20, 1968, demanded 'a one sided Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories before it is too late.' He wrote in the paper *Davar*: 'A peace settlement cannot be achieved by direct negotiations; this formula of "direct negotiations" is a curtain behind which the annexationists take cover to shut the mouths of all who do not accept their will.'

The Communist Party has breached its previous isolation. Their meetings are now attended by non-Party people who work with the Party. This swelling opposition to the Government's policies has found concrete expression in the September Histadrut elections

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where the Communists received 13,000 votes, an increase of 5,000 over the previous elections in 1965. For the first time Communists will have representation on the local workers' councils in Tel-Aviv, Haifa and Acre. In Nazareth the Communists won a majority of Council seats.

Despite the fact that Gahal—the extreme right-wing party gained an increase of five seats in the recent elections to the Israeli parliament, it is not the great victory of the right wing it is represented to be, although of course it is nothing to be pleased about. In the 1965 elections Gahal had 26 seats, but the party split, the splitters taking over four seats and calling itself the 'Free Centre', thus leaving Gahal with 22 seats. At the last election the splitters won only one seat, the other three going back to Gahal. Thus in fact Gahal has won an increase of only two seats and not five.

All parties in Israel are Zionist except the Communist Party, led by Meir Vilner. Amongst these Zionist parties there has been a small redistribution of seats orientating Zionist policies still further to the right. Against this Zionist block the increased influence of the Communist Party, despite a very real terror directed against them and their supporters, stands out.

The Communist Party increased its total vote by 30 per cent to 30,051 and retains its three MPs. At the time of writing not all votes have come in (army, etc.) and it is very possible that the Communists will receive a fourth seat. Of the 30 per cent increased vote received by the Communists, it is estimated that 10 per cent are Jewish votes. It is therefore clear that opposition to Zionist policies is growing in Israel, and the overwhelming support which Zionism enjoyed in 1967 no longer exists.

Simultaneously, Arab understanding, resistance and organisation outside Israel has grown greatly. That historical reality does not favour imperialist designs is shown by Libya's demand that the Americans close their Tripoli air base, and the cancelling of armament orders from Britain that do not serve Libyan needs, while Turkey—a Nato member—refuses to allow the US to use their air base in Turkey to transport troops and supplies to the Lebanon!

The June war of 1967 was mounted *mainly* to destroy the Arab liberation movement for the benefit of imperialism, out of which of course the Israeli Zionists hope to gain permanently increased territory. The main aim was, however, frustrated. Instead there is a turn to the left in many Arab states, and a vast increase in the popularity of the USSR, side by side with a great decrease in the popularity of the US. This situation is not to the liking of the

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imperialists, who as a consequence, are finding greater difficulty in pressing Arab reaction into service to protect imperialist interests in the Middle East. In an effort to stop this falling away of US influence amongst the Arab states, Scranton, Nixon's special envoy in the Middle East, in February 1969 called for a more balanced US policy, while Charles Yost, US ambassador to the UN called for big power talks to find an agreed settlement. These discussions have been held but to date without finality, mainly due to the intransigence of the Zionist Israeli ruling clique.

There is no clear-cut behaviour on the part of the US imperialists; for while the big power meetings were going on, they also agreed to supply Israel with 50 Phantom fighter bombers. This reflects the conflict amongst the US ruling clique. The conflict between what such elements desire and what they can actually achieve is being decided by the historical needs of the populations inhabiting the area itself. While on the one hand US policy is under great pressure to make an accommodation with the Arab states, or lose more and more influence with them, and plot a course *away* from backing Israel 100 per cent, it nevertheless still manoeuvres to exploit Israel's occupation of Arab territory to use as a bargaining counter in dealing with the Arab liberation movement so as to protect their interests in the Middle East. Thus, the US imperialists vacillate between accepting the course of a political settlement, or using the mailed fist of the Israeli Zionist ruling clique. *This is a situation of the greatest danger in the immediate future.* It explains Nasser's pronouncement of November 6, in which he warns American imperialism that the UAR is not willing to accept Israeli dictats, and is prepared for any new military escalations, if this is the road, as all the signs indicate, which Israel is hell bent on following.

The Lebanese affair, the Phantom planes, the British tanks, the pronouncement that American citizens may join the Israeli army, the increase in right wing influence on the Israeli Government, and Dayan's annexationist statements, all very strongly point the need for great vigilance in the months that lie immediately ahead. Above all, they underline the urgent need to build a front of solidarity with all in Britain who wish to prevent a new major military escalation in the Middle East, and who wish to see justice done to the inhabitants of Palestine, both Arabs and Jews, on the minimum basis of the *implementation* of the UN November 22, 1967, Security Council resolution. Stan Newens, Labour MP for Epping, made an appeal for such a front in the *Morning Star* of October 22. We should hasten to support it.

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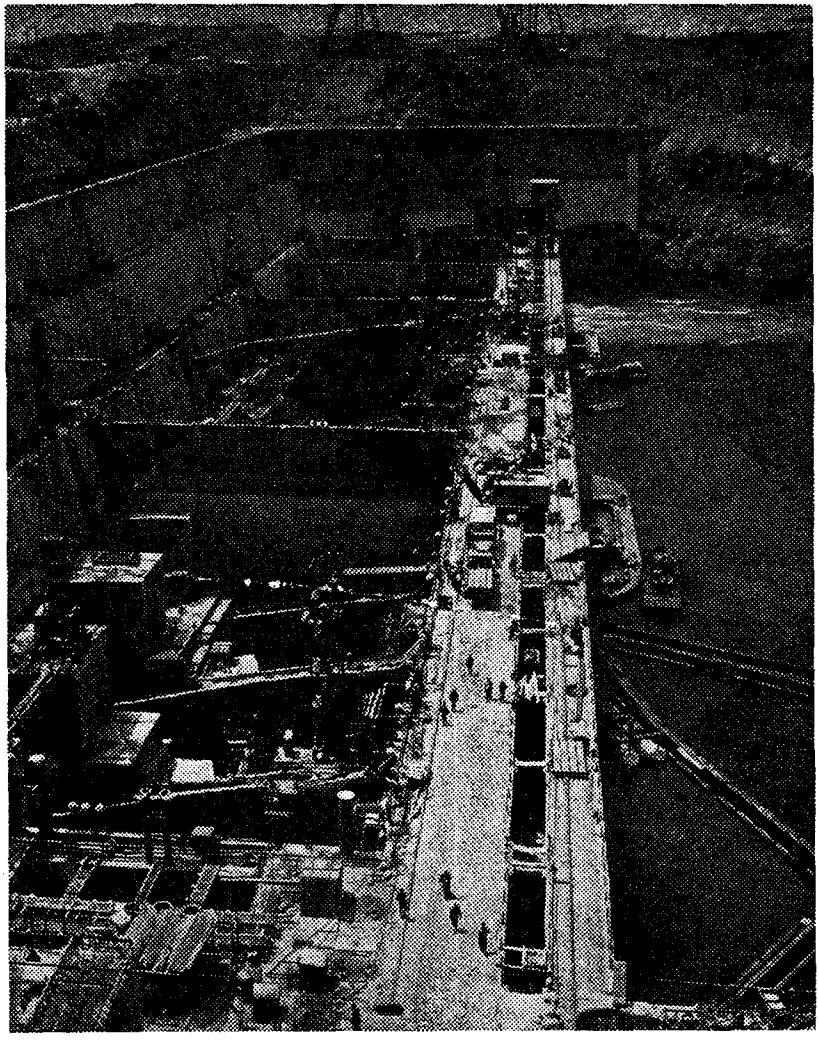

'Many people looking at Egypt who expect Nasser to behave like a "pure" socialist or even a communist are often disappointed by him and then blame him or imagine that he has betrayed the socialist world. This is a profound mistake. "We are not a socialist country yet," he said in November 1964 in a speech to the National Assembly. "We are in a state of transition from capitalism to socialism." '

Photographs and extracts from:
Living Egypt, Paul Strand and James Aldridge.

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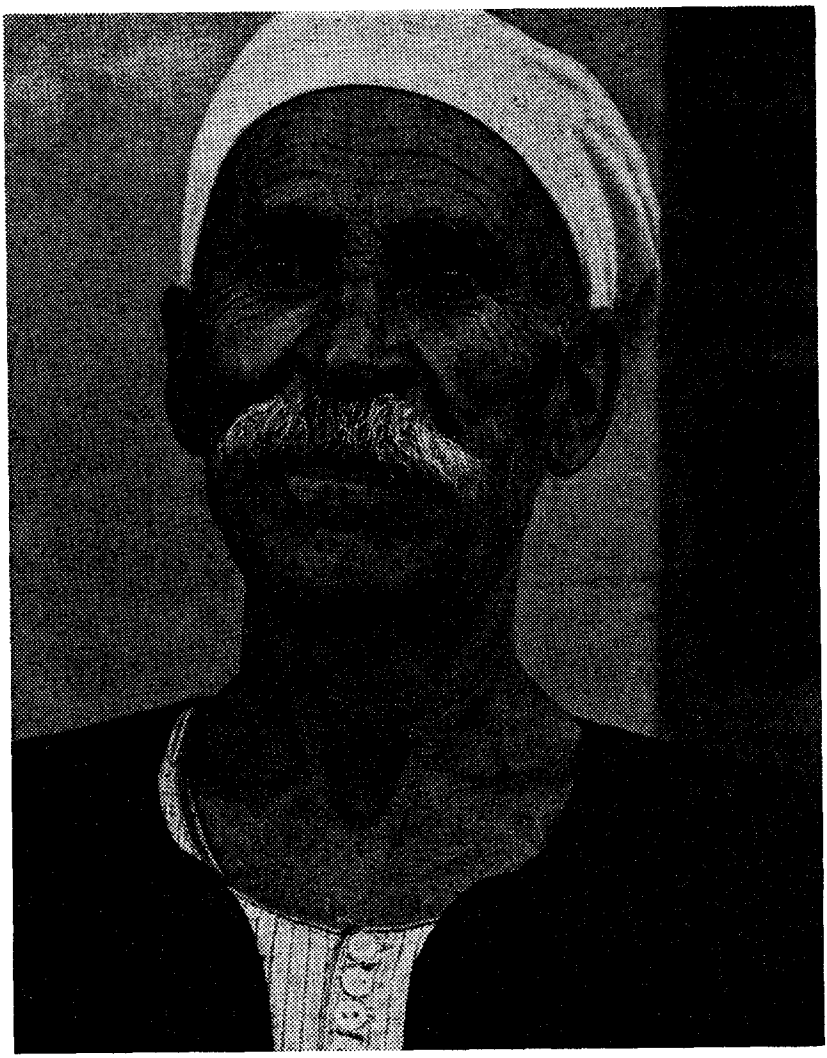

'. . . the fellah is curious and lively and intelligent and hungry for advancement, and his world will shift like a mountain when a generation of literate peasantry is born. Not only literate in the religious sayings of Mohamed and the saints but educated in the real traditions of Arabic science. Then a revolution of another sort (for the first time since the birth of this hardy and indefatigable people) will at last go his way.'

MacGibbon & Kee, 156 pp., 105 illustrations, 65s.

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GREECE—THE OUTLOOK

Tony Ambatielos

THE permanent characteristic of the neo-fascist military regime, established in Greece with the aid of the CIA and Nato arms, is instability. During the 31 months since the coup of April 21, 1967, the Junta government has been re-shuffled innumerable times. When the most recent re-shuffle took place in July 1969, the Junta chief, Papadopoulos, had to take five ministries himself because he could not find collaborators ready to share the criminal responsibility of the ruling military clique. The chronic crisis plaguing the fascist regime has its explanation. Because it is a tool of foreign economic and military interests, it comes into conflict with the whole nation. All social classes and strata—except for a handful of monopolists who collaborate with their foreign counterparts—stand in direct opposition to the regime.

A brief outline of the economic policy of the military Junta will explain the phenomenon which is unique in modern Greek history: namely, a government which is hated, resisted—openly or covertly—and despised by the overwhelming majority of Greeks, irrespective of their political or ideological views or social origin. The chief concern of the Junta was, and is, to serve foreign capital. From the time Greece became a 'free' state, and dependent economically, politically and militarily on the big western powers, the great curse holding back its economic and social development was precisely this foreign dependence. What the colonels did was to abolish the last remnants of economic independence and complete the sell-out to the imperialists.

Conditions for foreign capital are now so attractive that most of the big Greek capitalists have turned themselves into . . . foreign ones!—first and foremost among them, the Greek shipowners. They import their capital under the most incredible foreign labels and enjoy all the privileges afforded by the Junta—relieved of taxation, duty-free importation of machinery and raw materials and free export of profits in foreign exchange. At the same time, having abolished all trade union rights and using the worst terrorism, they keep the workers on the lowest wages in Europe and the worst conditions. For example: Greece is the sole country where overtime has become compulsory for the workers. Similarly, though labour legislation bans night work for women, now there are cases in textiles where women make up the main labour force, where they

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work two consecutive shifts making 16 hours in all. To be able to impose such anti-labour laws and conditions, the Junta dissolved the progressive trade union organisations and sent to concentration camps hundreds of leading trade unionists. Any unions which remained they placed under their control. The turnover on capital is so fast that the international economic invaders see Greece as a paradise for profits. This policy, however, towards big home and foreign capital means painful consequences for the people. As in all the underdeveloped capitalist countries the budget allocations are met mainly by indirect taxation. But with the difference that the Junta overdoes it! The 1969 budget rose to 51,107 million drachmas or 1,700 million dollars.

One third of the budget is allocated to the war ministries, the maintenance of the Junta's police machine, and to meet the interest on foreign loans. Only after this is the rest divided up among the various spheres of national and social life. For example education takes only 10 per cent of the regular budget. The Junta's policy on foreign trade is no better. The deficit in the first four months of 1969 rose 22.5 per cent in relation to 1968, which was 771 million dollars. The balance of foreign payments is kept even for the time being, thanks to the foreign exchange from emigrants, seamen, and foreign loans. But this source being insecure one may ask: How long will this evenness in the balance of foreign payments last? The Greek economy hangs by a thread which, if it snaps, will bring terrible disaster to the country. With the invasion of foreign capital, small or medium businesses are closing down or being forced like poor relatives to amalgamate with the foreign concerns. So the Junta's whole policy leads it to conflict with the people, including even a section of the bourgeois class whose interests are bound up with the development of the home market.

It is this contradiction between the whole nation and a handful of monopolists that explains the absence of political figures from the Junta government's 'shop window'. What keeps the Junta in power? There is, as is well known, the open economic, political and military support of the US, and the similar support, open or camouflaged, of the governments of Western Europe. But there is a second, most basic reason: the lack of unity of the anti-dictatorship political forces of the country.

In Greece, there are three main political trends: the left, the centre and the right. The left, which has passed through a most acute crisis of political direction, was unprepared, ideologically and organisationally, when the coup took place. The defeat of the demo-

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cratic forces when the colonels took over showed the need for a Marxist-Leninist party of the working class with a firm political orientation and strong organisational links with the masses, ready to confront any situation. The KKE (Greek Communist Party) and the left generally were not in that state when the coup occurred. Already in leading circles legalistic illusions prevailed and, despite the fact that the leadership of the KKE directed attention to the danger of dictatorship, a group of its leading members had given an incorrect orientation to the whole left movement. At the very moment when Papadopoulos and Pattakos, with the aid of the CIA, were preparing every detail of the coup, the left, the whole people and the whole political world were orientated towards elections due on May 28, 1967. Two lines existed in the KKE: the first, that of the majority of the Central Committee, which correctly orientated the Party and the whole left, and the second, which had been rejected by the majority whenever it had been discussed in the higher organs of the Party but was, in practice, carried out by the broad organisations which held key positions in the legal movement of the left. This led, naturally, to a crisis in the whole left movement.

Independent of the responsibilities of the left, which is the vanguard of the anti-fascist forces, the historical responsibility for the drift to the fascist regime in Greece rests with the bourgeois-democratic centre. Its responsibility is all the greater when it continues as it does today to proclaim the same anti-communist slogans or give an ear to them. Neither is the right united. Its most reactionary section is under the influence of K. Karamanlis who, following his clash with the King and the voting down of his party, the ERE (National Radical Union), in the elections of 1963, has been in Paris. His statements in September reveal his desire to be a new Caesar, a national saviour.

Apart from the anti-communism which is common to all the bourgeois parties, there are illusions regarding the attitude of Greece's 'great allies', especially the US which, they believe, will one day give the Junta the sack and then call on them to govern. But such solutions, cooked up in the kitchens of official and unofficial US services, are anti-popular, anti-national and, in the last analysis, cannot lead Greece on to the road of normal democratic life. The KKE has many times called on all the anti-dictatorship parties and organisations to unite together around a minimum programme: 1. The overthrow of the Junta; 2. A provisional government of all the parties and anti-dictatorship organisations; 3. The release of all the political detainees and exiles; 4. The abolition of all the emer-

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gency laws and illiberal laws of the dictatorship and also of similar ones existing prior to the dictatorship, such as Decree Laws 509 against communism and 375 on 'espionage'; 5. Free elections for a Constituent Assembly. Apart from this minimum programme, the KKE has made a call for unity of action aimed at the overthrow of the dictatorship. So far, these patriotic proposals have come up against the tacit or open refusal of the other political forces. But the KKE and the left generally are struggling for this solution which alone is in the interests of the nation and which will be given, not as a result of negotiations behind the backs of the people, but as a consequence of the struggle of the Greek people, which will compel the foreign invader agents to abandon power. Then the Greek people will freely decide in what way and by whom it wishes to be governed.

WAKEY! WAKEY!

Jack Eighteen

JACK DASH'S opening remark of 'Good morning, Brothers' to the men assembled for an early morning mass meeting at the dock gates has come to resound like hammer blows on the doors of power to the employers in the industry. If they are awakening to the fact that 'Fings aint what they used to be' it is because the organised mass opinions of the men are forcing them to accept the facts of modern life.

Technical changes like containerisation are revolutionising the port industry and many others. The profits to be made are enormous if the employers were allowed to pocket the majority of the wage packets 'saved' as a result of the new methods. But port workers are also awake to this. They are not allowing, and will not allow the technical revolution to proceed without unprecedented social changes that will give them a better life, both at work and at home. Their opinions and ideas are so strong and advanced that their 'newness' is frightening the employers for they are accompanied by demands that could lead forward from social change into the socialist change.

This is the overall broad conception conveyed to me by the reading of Jack Dash's autobiography.* This book is not just a story of Jack's life in the East End of London, told as it is with a warmth for family, neighbours and workmates, and rich in experience of struggle shared by most East End families. But it also shows

* *Good Morning Brothers!*, Jack Dash. *Lawrence & Wishart*, 190 pp., 35s.

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how these struggles and changes in industry and the long hard work of progressive, Communist and other movements and the *Morning Star* are influencing the outlook and character of the East End from 1914 to the present day. It is a broad canvass, not a detailed documentary; it is Jack's grasp of the changing mood that has enabled him to become the kind of leader and spokesman that he is. He is a man of the masses but he gives praise and warm thanks for the abilities of all those painstaking committee men, both official and unofficial, whose work has helped the advance of the port workers. Active workers in the trade unions and wider labour movement will find their thoughts about the modern shop stewards and shop stewards movement stimulated by Jack's stories of the unofficial liaison committee movement.

It is certain that the newly formed official shop stewards movement in the Port of London will in the style of its work reflect the best of the methods of the liaison committees. The modern shop steward, because the issues with which he has to deal are now more than ever interfered with by government and state committees, is forced to debate, in the full glare of the television, press and radio, the case for the demands of the workers he represents. Jack tells of his experiences in this field, both good and bad, warns of the methods used by establishment hacks to belittle and trap workers' representatives into statements that would harm their case in the eyes of the public. He also shows that with the confidence drawn from the masses he represents he has on occasion been able to make good use of these platforms. Most shop stewards will find something to learn from his writings on this.

The fact that today the port trade unions in London are engaged in hard negotiations for £28 for time workers and £37 10s. plus five per cent bonus for a 30-hour week and other improvements is in no small measure due to the mass work carried out over many years by the liaison committee and the militant pressure extended by the men in action. As Jack points out, though the rank and file have been highly critical of some of the trade union negotiators, the aim of the unofficial movement has always been to draw the unions into support and struggle for the implementation of the kind of policies that the men desire. The policy of the rank and file, produced by the liaison committee is fully documented in the book. For years many of the progressive, lay committee men and some trade union full-time officials have been working for aspects of it.

Nationalisation of the industry is now official policy of the trade unions. The bans on Communists holding office as shop stewards

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have been lifted. The employers have been prevented from sacking workers should they be regarded as superfluous to requirements and many a militant leader engaged in an unofficial industrial dispute has been saved from the sack. Jack shows how mass action plus democratic trade union functioning has won victories, where neither of them could have succeeded alone. The struggle is on in the ports. Is containerisation to bring only untold profits to the employers? Is the rate of exploitation of labour to know no limits under the new methods of cargo handling and workers to be sent down the road? Or is the labour of port workers to become more dignified and their status as skilled workers to be fully recognised?

The reading of Jack's book gives an insight into the way that port workers think and are prepared to act. The young men in the industry have a far different outlook about the value of their labour and the kind of life that that labour entitles them to. The struggles that have already been engaged in have taught them how to use their united strength. They will not allow their future to be sold by the restrictions contained in any so-called 'incomes policy' which would seek to prevent them as a whole making the kind of gains which this technical revolution in the industry can well provide. The employers, like Prince Charles who is being asked 'What will you do if the family business folds up?' might well be looking to the future and asking themselves 'What can we do if we are separated from ownership of our firms?' How the port workers have been brought to the position where they could drive bargains far and away above what could have been expected prior to these massive changes in technique is well worth reading by others also facing a 'restructuring' of their industries.

As you will see, this book spreads over from just an autobiography. It is about the man and his times up to the present years and how the working-class struggle moulds men and leaders of his type. It is written in a racy entertaining style with many a rough joke. Jack pays great credit to his wife Nell and his family for all their help through difficult periods which sometimes directly involved them through the invasion of their home and letter-box. His childhood and early working life in Southwark and Stepney, the jobs that he has held in various trades, the unemployment and his work in the fire services during the blitz, highlights many an East End character. All is told with lots of humour and with an understanding of experience shared, and will make those who read it say 'Yes, that is what it was like. I and my family too lived through those kind of days.'

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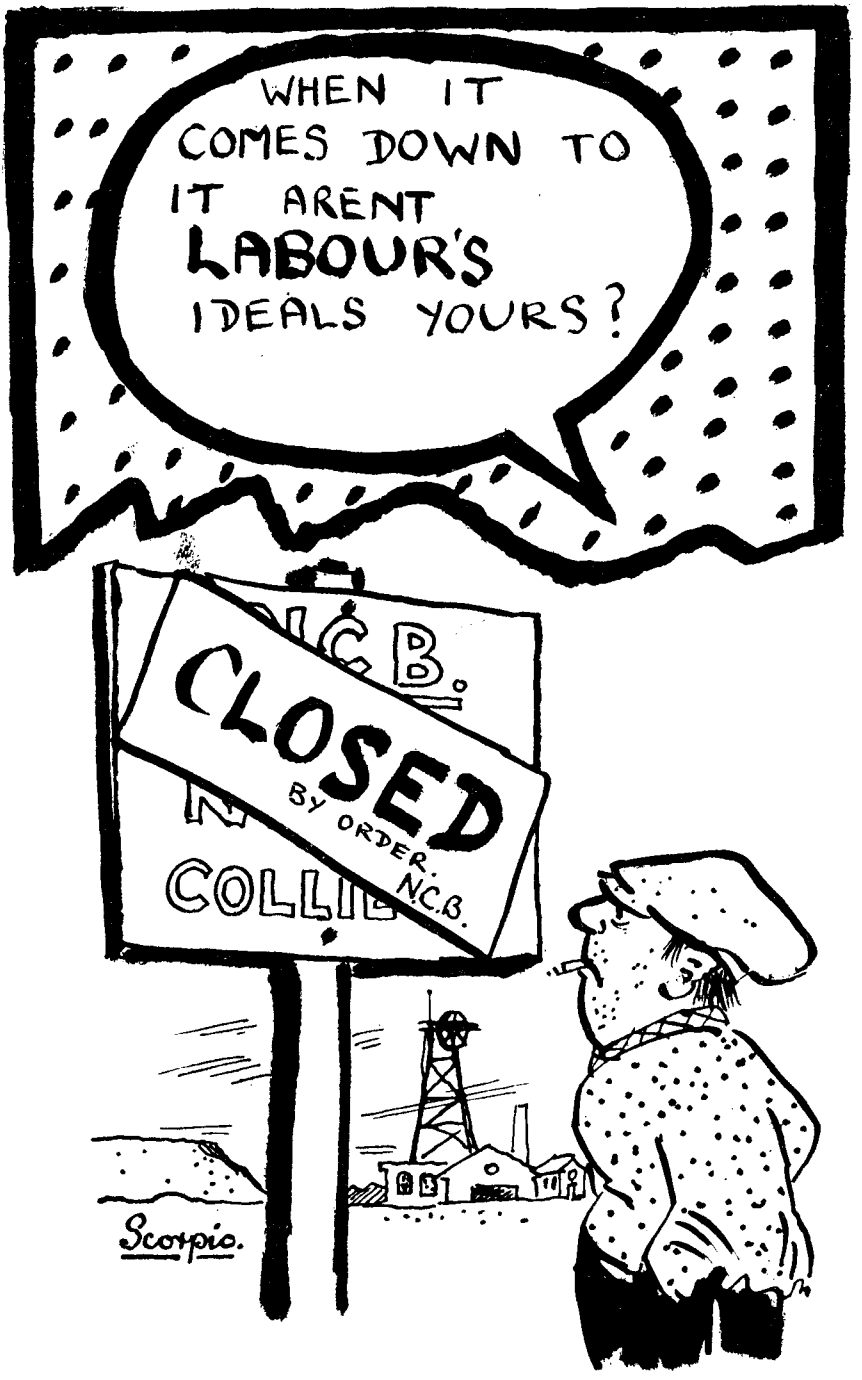

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ELECTION IMPRESSIONS

Judith Gradwell

ALTHOUGH it was a whirlwind campaign—only 16 days between the issue of a writ and polling day—Swindon had been expecting a by-election for 18 months. This period saw, in addition to the Tory, Labour and Communist Parties that contested in 1964 and 1966, the importation of a Liberal and Radical Association, complete with candidate, and the selection by the Socialist Labour League of Swindon as their national concentration point and their adoption of a 35 year old 'Young Socialist' candidate.

Throughout the campaign it was obvious that people were looking for possible alternatives to Labour and Tory; many were prepared to examine the Communist Party's policies. One notable example of this was a factory gate meeting at Pressed Steel Fisher, where there was an audience of 250-300 people. We held 30 such meetings, at which we outlined our policy on industrial struggles and emphasised that Swindon must not be a low-wage town. We advertised these meetings by distributing notices as the men and women went into work in the morning. At this particular meeting we knew the ATV cameras would be present so we included this fact on the leaflet. This may be why a large crowd came but it certainly wasn't the reason they all stayed. The TV interviewer gave me 40 seconds to outline my policies and then the cameras were packed up and they were off. But the workers stopped not only to hear my speech but also to ask questions ranging from what I thought of the monarchy, to measured day work. My statement on the Common Market was greeted with a wave of applause. This meeting which took place early in the campaign had a big impact inside the factory where it was widely discussed, and it also had a big impact on me. I was somewhat apprehensive lest, as a young woman and the daughter of the previous Communist candidate, I would not be regarded as a serious political person. In fact this was far from the case and this meeting reassured me. Although in the course of the campaign I got a fair amount of good natured repartee (to which I replied in like vein), when I was speaking I was always given serious attention.

Apart from open air meetings we held five public meetings. I spoke at the Rotary Club and a confrontation meeting called by the Council of Churches, and held a debate on the Common Market with the Liberal candidate. I found the questions the most fruitful part of all these meetings. A frequent question was housing. Swindon

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consists almost entirely of council tenants and owner-occupiers; there are few private tenants. There is no 'housing problem' in the Glasgow or London sense. However, once when I was canvassing a woman said 'We're lucky! We've got a fixed interest mortgage.' It was $8\frac{7}{8}$ per cent.—Lucky! At two meetings the question on housing took the form of 'Did I think it right for owner-occupiers to subsidise council tenants?' Our housing leaflet, 'Houses—for profit or people', emphasised that the problem of high mortgage rates stemmed from the same source as high council rents and that the only people who were subsidised were the money-lenders.

Another common question was on aid to underdeveloped countries. The contrast in our viewpoint with that of the other parties was strikingly brought out at the Council of Churches confrontation meeting. These were prepared questions so the lack of policy statements couldn't be put down to any personal failings of the candidates. While I was answering this question and concentrating on making my voice carry to the back of the balcony (the Town Hall was packed to its 350 maximum and people were turned away) *The British Road to Socialism* became yet more real to me. I could see the vicar of Swindon's main parish church nodding vigorously and after the meeting he made a point of congratulating me on my answer.

Because it was a by-election we got considerable coverage from the national press and the TV. It is an education to see the TV people stand with stop watches in hand to make sure no candidate gets a single second longer than another. For 16 days they are super democratic; for the other 350. . .

Again because it was a by-election we were somewhat worried lest the electoral machines of the other parties should swamp us out. No impressions of the campaign would be complete without mention of our campaign van (an erstwhile Bath City ambulance). There was no swamping that out. Lent to us for the whole of the campaign by comrades in Bristol and brightly decorated with posters and slogans it caused comment wherever it went. With a large number of night shift workers one can't use a loudspeaker during the day, except in the town centre or industrial estates. Decorated cars without loudspeakers are inconspicuous, but not an ambulance!

My overall impression is that the Communist Party waged an excellent campaign in a situation where a large proportion of the electorate was bewildered and confused on how most effectively to vote. In a poll approximately 1,000 lower than 1966 Labour dropped

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10,000 votes. The Tory vote increased by only 1,300. 8,000 votes were cast for other parties. Many people who voted Liberal thought they were voting for a party to the left of the Labour Party! Some, while agreeing with our policy, thought their protest vote would be more significant in a larger Liberal total.

The biggest single factor that contributed to the drop in the Communist vote was the publication of the results of a public opinion poll. This predicted a very close result and persuaded previous Communist voters to vote Labour in an attempt to defeat the Tory. Undoubtedly support for the policies we put forward was far greater than the result indicated. Certainly there is no one in Swindon today who doesn't know that there is an alternative to the right-wing policies which are at present supported by Government and Opposition alike.

THEATRE

'The Mother' Brian Durrans

THIS ADAPTATION by Bertolt Brecht from Gorki's novel traces the transformation of Pelagea Vlassova from impoverished respectability to disciplined Bolshevism. Set in Tsarist Russia between 1905 and 1917, it will be relevant as long as men—and mothers—fight to change society.

The mother is introduced to revolutionary theory and practice through her son Pavel, but her concern for him is never obscured by her political development. On the contrary, it is the bedrock on which a revolutionary awareness is built, for it extends to all victims of the system.

We learn with the mother as she helps print leaflets, argues socialist theory, wins the peasants, agitates against the war, as through all the day to day activity Brecht exposes the bare bones of class struggle with a shattering simplicity.

Patanne Fairfoot, in the Unity Theatre production (due to run until December 21), is outstanding in her portrayal of the mother.

BOOKS

The Revolutionary Movement in Britain 1900-1921
Walter Kendall

Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 454 pp., 105s.

IT IS AN OLD LEGEND, paralleled in other countries, that the British Communist Party was created by 'the Russians' with the help of 'Moscow gold', and that it was 'alien to British soil'. Hundreds of articles and a few books have been written to support this favourite story of the Tory, Liberal and right-wing Labour politicians. They draw for the most part on the belated 'revelations' of persons expelled from the Communist Party for being police agents, or such as could not stay the course in an organisation which, against all the traditions imposed since Chartism on the British working class (and still infiltrated into its ranks by high-sounding propaganda), sought to carry Marxist theory into everyday agitation—swimming against the tide.

A new and enlarged effort to go over the same ground was made this

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year, drawing in addition on police and intelligence reports made available in Cabinet papers, with a modicum of quotations from authentic Communist statements. The work was met with enthusiasm by reviewers in such renowned tribunes of the workers' cause and socialism as *The Times*, *The Observer*, *The Economist*, *The Listener*—particularly because of its assertions that the Communist Party is an 'artificial creation . . . insignificant . . . a failure . . . less than nothing'.

The book consists of two sections. The first analyses the left wing movement in the British working class up to the October 1917 revolution in Russia; the second deals with the formation of the Communist Party. Mr. Kendall makes clear that in fact the second section was written first, and gained him a B.Litt. at Oxford; the first part, which makes the book somewhat less reminiscent of the old *Morning Post*, was tacked on later.

Yet it is this part which is the more interesting for anyone concerned with the real history of the British workers. The author tackles in succession (i) the Social-Democratic Federation, later the British Socialist Party, (ii) the Socialist Labour Party, (iii) the supposed influence of Russian political exiles, (iv) wartime experiences of the BSP and of the shop stewards after 1914, (v) the BSP after the 'old gang' of jingo socialists had been forced out at Easter 1916. A further chapter, on Guild Socialism and the Labour Research Department, is included, quite out of place, in the second part of the book.

Space forbids doing more than mention the main features of this section. Albeit making a number of errors of fact, Kendall does arrive at the conclusion that the growing menace of European war and the great upsurge of industrial struggle and class feeling had, by 1914, begun to eat away on the one hand the hold of Liberalism on the working class, including the small minority then organised in trade unions, and on the other hand the sectarianism prevalent among the much smaller minority of revolutionary socialists. Wartime experiences after 1914 had greatly speeded up this process.

Unlike Morton and Tate's *British Labour Movement*, to which he makes no significant addition apart from much detail, Mr. Kendall ignores the outstanding ideological fact of *those* war years—that the working class and its organisations were still soaked in imperialist prejudices; he has no space in his vast book for the economic and political influence of imperialism on the British working class, and for the difficulties it created and still creates for revolutionary socialists. Consequently he has an easy task in misrepresenting the fight against the war which was being manfully conducted by parties and militants accustomed to legal methods of work, and learning to do otherwise very slowly, by bitter experience, and in face of a ferocious Defence of the Realm Act supported by jingo trade union, Labour and socialist leaders—while events were moving very fast. It is particularly comic to read his stern rebuke to them for not agitating against the war within the army: who is Mr. Kendall, a loyal member of the Labour Party, to criticise *that*?

Now we come to the first of Mr. Kendall's major discoveries—the 'Russian influence' in British socialism. To soften up the reader, he begins by solemnly attributing to the *Bolsheviks* the notorious idea of *Trotsky* that, without world revolution, one in Russia 'must inevitably drown in an ocean of petty bourgeois

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peasant limitedness'—a view which Lenin combated from 1916, when Trotsky expressed it, until his last articles in 1923. Then our author asserts that, once the Comintern was established, 'the British question rapidly became a major preoccupation of its leaders'—when the facts, as older Communists know and agendas of conferences could demonstrate, are quite the contrary. Then he heightens the effect by 'suggesting' (his word) that the first Soviet mission which arrived in May 1920 'influenced' the Communist unity negotiations—for which he admits 'no direct evidence is available', and which is nonsense. Finally he arrives at his grand point—that Russian influence on British socialism, imported through refugees from Tsardom, made for 'a markedly higher degree of revolutionary consciousness' and even played at one moment 'a crucial part'.

And the evidence? Here Mr. Kendall resorts to a perfect scrapbook of incongruous items. Many thousands of emigrants came to Britain before and after the 1905 revolution: perfectly true—and the vast majority of them were not revolutionaries at all, but Jews escaping from anti-Semitic persecution. Apart from a few individuals, they took no part in the socialist movement here. Jewish anarchists—some of whom were Russian—opened a club in Stepney in 1906, which Russian anarchist refugees used to frequent—and how did this affect British socialism, anti-anarchist from the days of William Morris? Peter Kropotkin, famous Russian anarchist, settled in Britain in 1876—and how did that promote revolution in Britain, particularly as he was a violent opponent of Marxism? Stepniak, the great Narodnik, lived here from 1884 until his death in 1895—and steadfastly refused to support the SDF (though a speech of his about Tsardom did help to convert William Morris to socialism). Plekhanov came to England in 1903 for the Russian Social-Democratic Congress, and was found 'engrossed in conversation' with J. B. Askew, opponent of Hyndman in the SDF—just fancy! Litvinov lived in London from 1908 to 1918—but his activity was on behalf of the Bolshevik Party entirely, not in the British movement, until after 1917. Harry Quelch printed *Iskra* at Clerkenwell Green in 1902-3, and gave fraternal greetings at the Russian Social-Democrats' Congress in London in 1907—and what does that prove?

Then there are the members of the SDF-BSP with Russian origins. Zelda Kahan, prominent for her propaganda work and her internationalism before 1914, famous for her fifty years in the 'Hands Off Russia' fight and the Anglo-Russian Parliamentary Committee, was a 'product of emigré environment'—a discreet phrase this, masking the simple facts: that she came to England at the age of *ten*, that neither of her parents were revolutionaries, and that she learned her socialism from *British* socialists primarily, and in the *British* SDF, except in so far as all internationally-minded Marxists in those days studied experiences in other lands. Joe Fineberg was a leading anti-war and anti-Zionist fighter in the BSP, and elected to its EC against the jingoes in October 1914—and did he import 'Russian influence' thereby? Hardly, since Mr. Kendall himself admits that Joe had been brought to England at . . . eighteen months. He too learned his Marxism in the SDF.

There is Chicherin in Mr. Kendall's list—in Britain only from 1914 to 1918, then a Menshevik-Internationalist, working primarily on behalf of the Russian emigrants threatened with call-up, and with a broad British

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committee raising funds for the families of Russian political prisoners.

There is Peter Petrov in the list—and here it becomes quite ludicrous. True, he had been 'a combatant in the revolution of 1905'—but as a Bundist, an ally of the Mensheviks, not a Bolshevik. True, he joined the Kentish Town branch of the BSP—but he was soon renowned for sowing dissension under the guise of revolutionary 'vigilance'. William Gallacher describes one memorable occasion on the Clyde in 1915; there were others. Expelled by the British Government in 1917, he was sent to Berlin in 1918 with a prisoner-of-war repatriation committee, but began issuing political statements on his own which necessitated his hasty withdrawal. In 1920, when I visited Russia for the first time, he and his wife had just been thrown out of the Red Army (where they had worked as political agitators) because of their denunciations of Lenin—and didn't they let me know it, on my second morning in Petrograd! Finally, he was sent as a trade official to Hamburg in 1925, and refused to go back to Russia. To speak of Petrov as part of the 'Russian influence' in British revolutionary socialism is just silly.

Thus, stripped of ambiguous insinuations like 'cannot have failed', 'reasonable to suppose' and the like, Mr. Kendall's thesis amounts to a thing of threads and patches, and flimsy ones at that.

All he can fall back on, in reality, is the part played by Theodore Rothstein, a member of the SDF and BSP from 1895 to 1914, when he resigned over the Party's attitude to the European war. He had campaigned for internationalism in the early years, and his moral defeat of Hyndman in 1901, over whether socialists should lead the struggle against war (then raging in South Africa), led to his election to the EC that year and until 1906. He wrote on many theoretical and foreign policy questions in the Party press. During the first world war he wrote Marxist internationalist articles in the BSP's *Call* from 1916-1920 (which he signed as 'John Bryan' and 'W.A.M.M.', being still an unnaturalised foreigner). Finally, his particular part in pressing for Communist unity in 1919-1920, and in the 'Hands Off Russia' struggle, has received public tribute from William Gallacher, Harry Pollitt, R. P. Dutt and others.

All this is true, and I should be the last to 'play down' the work of my father as a revolutionary Marxist. But what has it to do with Mr. Kendall's 'Russian influence'? Theodore Rothstein came to Britain in 1891 when he was 20; in Poltava, till then, he was a member of a Narodnik group of young people. Although he had just begun to read Marxist literature, when he came here he began working as secretary with the 'Friends of Russian Freedom', which published a journal, *Free Russia*, exposing Tsardom. A glance at the back page would show anyone familiar with the politics of the day that the overwhelming majority of its leaders were Liberals. He only joined the SDF in 1895. Of course, like other Social-Democrats of that age, for example Askew, Quelch and Bax, being able to read German he studied the literature published by the German SDP, which included the works of Marx and Engels. But it was in Britain, as a member of the SDF, that he became a Marxist in theory and practice, studying and writing about the problems of the British working class.

He also helped to get the Twentieth Century Press to print *Iskra*; he began writing in 'legal' Russian Marxist journals about British affairs in 1904; in 1907 he helped to get

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funds from the American soap-boiler Fels for the Russian Social-Democrats' Congress in London, when money ran out; and in 1912-1914 he was London correspondent for *Pravda*. This was part of his work as a socialist internationalist, not as a channel of 'Russian influence'. But it was natural that, being domiciled in Britain for over 25 years and well known in the British and international socialist movement, he should have been asked in 1918 to act on behalf of the Bolsheviks in defence of the Socialist Republic.

For on this our usually loquacious author preserves almost complete silence: it was capitalist Britain which attacked Soviet Russia with fire and sword, subsidy of counter-revolution and subversive intrigue—not the other way round. The foreign invasions of Soviet Russia, planned and organised above all by Churchill from December 1917 onwards as Cabinet documents now confirm, cost the Soviet people 1,700,000 dead and untold national wealth. What did they cost Britain? Mainly the £100 million which, Lloyd George admitted in a Guildhall speech on November 8, 1919, had been spent on the purposes mentioned. You can find only fleeting and obscure references to this in Mr. Kendall's book—and none at all to the deluge of lies poured out over the heads of the British public, day after day for three years, from press, pulpit and parliament, to back intervention.

Yet it is at this point that—with a plentiful use of phrases like 'may well have . . . it seems . . . it is reasonable to assume'—Mr. Kendall's second trump card (or mare's nest) appears: the financial aid given to a number of organisations in those years. By laborious combing of the (often extravagantly boastful) memoirs of police and secret agents, their reports presented to the Cabinet, and hindsight recollections of former members of the BSP or CP, Mr. Kendall establishes to his own satisfaction that, through Theodore Rothstein or others, the BSP had, in the two years before the CP was established, some £3,000 at least; Sylvia Pankhurst's Workers' Socialist Federation no less; the Socialist Labour Party in 1919 'nearly £300'; the People's Russian Information Bureau, which circulated facts and documents from Soviet Russia in 1918-1920, about £1,000; the shop stewards' movement 'a considerable subsidy' (put by one ex-Communist at £4,000)—a total over two years of perhaps £15,000 altogether. Without such financial aid, Mr. Kendall concludes, there would have been no Communist Party, and it would have disappeared within a couple of years after its foundation but for the aid being continued. Needless to say, he does not consider the question of why it didn't 'fold up' when the aid *was* stopped, over forty years ago . . .

It may be noticed that Mr. Kendall does not appear to have heard of international solidarity taking a financial form, both before and after the October Revolution—and the sums corresponding to the movement's possibilities. Minutes of the General Council of the First International refer constantly to such aid—a century ago. Lenin's letters show the British Labour Representation Committee in 1905 sending the Russian socialists £200. In 1907 the German Social-Democrats gave £800 for the latter's London Congress. On the other hand, since the second world war the TUC has spent tens of thousands of pounds on sending organisers to colonies and Commonwealth countries to inculcate British trade union principles, or maintaining students from those countries here, to study British trade unionism.

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Ah, but this was not aid, says Mr. Kendall, from 'one of the most powerful European States' (p. 236), 'a major European power' (p. 244), backed by 'all the resources of a great nation state' (p. 297), and so on. To realise what an outrageous defiance of facts this description of Soviet Russia in 1918-20 this is—a country ruined by the first world war and now faced with its continuation, attacked by fourteen countries at once, ragged and hungry—one needs to look at such a book as Arthur Ransome's *Six Weeks in Russia in 1919* or the *Report of the British Labour Delegation to Russia, 1920*; and the modest sums mentioned by Mr. Kendall show it. Naturally, a workers' state had no right to help even to that extent its sympathisers in other countries: that right was and is reserved to capitalist states, as British practice in the first and second world war showed. If the Soviet Union has indeed become such a power today, it is in spite of the Kendalls of 1919-20.

And the temporary financial aid did not mean that a single person was killed in Great Britain, as thousands were being killed in Soviet Russia by British-financed (and sometimes British-operated) weapons; or that arms were being smuggled for such purposes into Great Britain; or that anything like the millionaire press which was lying about Russia was being created to counteract the lies (Mr. Kendall gratuitously assumes that £75,000 which were offered to the *Daily Herald* in August 1920, when the British Government was threatening to resume war on the Soviet Republic, 'may have been placed at the disposal of the CPGB' —which it wasn't). No, the money went to help tiny four-page or eight-page weeklies, gallantly trying to stem the overwhelming torrent of falsehood from a reptile press with a thousand times the resources; or to issue little duplicated bulletins of facts about Soviet Russia to the movement—and for form's sake to the enemy newspapers. Above all, the money went, for a time, to pay a handful of organisers and political staff who, *on Mr. Kendall's own showing* (p. 305) got some £5 a week—less than such skilled workmen as Tom Bell, Arthur McManus, William Gallacher or Harry Pollitt could and did earn in their own trade with far smaller discomfort, not to speak of academics who could have sold themselves to the bourgeois camp for a comfortable career at many times the price. No more hypocritical nonsense has been talked by anti-Communist propagandists than the kind, once again peddled by Mr. Kendall, about 'Russian money'.

The Communists, both workers and intellectuals, didn't sell themselves, because Communism doesn't depend on people who are 'making a career'. But of course the philistines can't understand this: any more than their predecessors could understand why Marx in Germany and Lenin in Russia threw up their chances of a 'career'.

As for the Communist Party allegedly being a 'failure', I don't think it necessary to argue with Mr. Kendall about *that*. James Klugmann's *History of the Communist Party* gives the hard facts.

ANDREW ROTHSTEIN

Building With Men: An Analysis of Group Behaviour and Organisation in a Building Firm

Charles Foster

Tavistock Publications, 220 pp., 35s.

THE AUTHOR tries to tell the workers that mergers are good for them.

R. L.

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The Monarchy and its Future
Edited by Jeremy Murray-Brown
Allen & Unwin, 228 pp., 35s.

HENRY FORD said that history was bunk. He was wrong. History is far from being bunk; however offensively interpreted, it is at least the record of man. Tradition is bunk, and this compendium is a record of sycophantic tradition, pernicious nonsense, and downright misrepresentation—a sorry effort for twenty more or less well known authors.

The best written essay is by Compton Mackenzie, although his romanticism invalidates his general humanitarian and emotional nature. The most patronising comes, of course, from an American — Henry Luce IIIrd, who writes as if America was a young country. It has been going for nearly two hundred years—in fact, for nearly four. It is young in its bloody mindedness, its murderousness — 10,000 capital crimes a year and the assassination of half a dozen Presidents is not a basis on which to present American superiority to a country that has cut off one King's head and assassinated, in 300 years, one Prime Minister.

The title of this book is misleading, because nobody can say what the future of the Monarchy is in England. As one writer says: 'It is a philistine family, and it has always put its private preferences before its public duties' (c.f. the Duke of Windsor, whose duty faltered beneath the steely gaze of a twice wedded divorcee from America. After all, Mrs. Simpson didn't pinch the crown jewels, but she did pinch the King).

William Hamilton devotes a lot of his essay to detailing how the vast amount of money is spent. The Royal Family is the richest family in the world, but what Hamilton neglects to say—it is also one of the meanest. At the time of the wedding of the Queen Mother to Prince Albert, Duke of York, the bridesmaids' brooches were made by the Court Jeweller, who was allowed the unprincely sum of £12 10s. for each brooch.

All that can be said is that it is a convenient handbook of snobism and idiocy, fit to read in an aeroplane just before it crashes, or a railway train before it piles up, which is the future of the British Monarchy.

WILFRED MACARTNEY

Towards the Lenin Centenary

Lenin on the Monarchy in England

The liberal innocents prattle about the example of a constitutional monarchy like that of England. But if in a civilised country like England, a country which has never known anything like the Mongolian yoke or the tyranny of a bureaucracy, or a military clique riding roughshod over it, if it was necessary in that country to chop off the head of one crowned robber in order to impress upon kings that they must be 'constitutional' monarchs, in a country like Russia we should have to chop off the heads of at least a hundred Romanovs in order to wean their successors from the habit of organising Black-Hundred murders and anti-Jewish pogroms.

Lenin, in *The Slogans and Organisation of Social-Democratic Work Inside and Outside the Duma*, December 1911 (*Collected Works*, English Edition, Vol. 17, p. 337).

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A BEQUEST AND AN OFFER

HUGO RATHBONE—readers of our November issue will have shared in remembering his long association with *LM* right up to the time of his death—has left us his complete set of bound volumes of the journal to be put up for sale.

A complete set, going back to Volume 1, 1921, is a rarity. Numerous good trade union, university and public reference libraries, in this country and abroad, have sets; many others have had to wait in the hope that one will come on to the market.

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We are inviting offers for the set, starting at £300, and hope our readers will take the suggestion to any person, organisation or library they think might be interested.

Following last month's rising fund figures, we are very sorry to see this month's at such a low level. These figures record contributions made during October—well after the end of the difficult holiday season. Please, please help us back in the direction of our monthly £100 by raising the question of a regular monthly contribution in your trade union or labour movement organisation. This is the surest way to safeguard the fund.

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History of Soviet Foreign Policy 1917-1945, edited by B. Ponomaryov and others. Progress Publishers (Central Books), 498 pp., 21s.

Our Own People, Elizabeth K. Poretsky. Oxford University Press, 278 pp., 42s.

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